# INDEPENDENT SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA Inc

## NSW Chapter

## Bulletin 124 August 2026

http://www.isaa.org.au

**ISSN 2207-614X**


Dear Members,

Our next in person event is a Work-in-Progress meeting (details in Dates for Your Diary) on 2 October. The Public Affairs Reading Group has retuned to in person events on 9 October and 6 November. The Biography Reading Group continues to meet via Zoom (details in Dates for Your Diary).

The ISAA Annual General Meeting is taking place via Zoom at 4 pm on 17 September (details have been circulated).

If you have any contributions for the next *Bulletin*, such as scholarly book notes, notes on exhibitions, films or plays, or interesting snippets of research, please send them to me by **23 October 2026** at: cjennett@ozemail.com.au.

**Christine Jennett, *Bulletin* Editor**

### 2026 ISAA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

13 November 2026

The 2026 ISAA Conference will be held in Sydney on **Friday 13 November.** This one-day conference will run from 10 am until 5 pm in the Ideas Space at Darling Square Library, Haymarket, with drinks and nibblies to follow at a nearby venue. The Ideas Space is accessible by foot from Town Hall or Central stations, or by Light Rail from Central. Registration is expected to open at the end of September, and further information will be disseminated soon. In the meantime, you can view the draft conference program: www.isaa.org.au>events>upcomingevents

### NSW Chapter ISAA

**Executive members**

Chair: Christine Yeats FRAHS
Vice-Chair:
Secretary:
Treasurer: Dr Rodney Nillsen
Immediate Past Chair: Dr Christine Jennett

**Committee Members**:

Dr Lesley Potter
Dr Judith Bonzol
Dr Alice Paul
Dr Susan Steggall
Michelle Cavanagh

**Library Liaison:**

Christine Yeats

**Dates for Your Diary**

2 October: Work-in-Progress Meeting 3
9 October: Public Affairs Reading Group
29 October: Biography Reading Group
6 November; Public Affairs Reading Group
3 December: Christmas Lunch
26 February: Workshop. *The Biographer's Dilemma*

# UPCOMING EVENT

## Work-in-Progress Meeting

Friday 2 October2026
11 – 12.30 pm
Honeysuckle Room, Floor 5, 222 Pitt Street
Donation $10 (contribution to room hire)



Speaker: Christine Yeats

## Topic: Convict transportation across the Empire: Bermuda and New South Wales

### Abstract

Between 1824 and 1863, Britain transported approximately 9,000 male convicts to Bermuda. Confined aboard decommissioned naval vessels known as prison hulks, they provided labour for the construction and fortification of the Royal Naval Dockyard. Conditions were harsh, and over the four decades of the system an estimated 20% of the convicts died.

This presentation examines a series of case studies of convicts who served sentences in Bermuda, returned to England, and were subsequently convicted and transported to New South Wales. Particular attention will be given to the group known as the 'incorrigibles', who arrived in the Australian colonies aboard the *Royal Admiral* in 1830.

### About the speaker

Christine Yeats FAHS is an archivist and historical researcher with a strong commitment to local and community history. She is dedicated to preserving Australia's documentary heritage through her work with leading history and heritage organisations, including the Royal Australian Historical Society (RAHS) and the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Committee. Christine also chairs the Board of the Jessie Street National Women's Library and ISAA (NSW). In 2023 she was made a Fellow of the RAHS.

# RECENT EVENT

## Work-in-Progress Meeting

10 July Honeysuckle Room, 222 Pitt St 11-12.30pm

Speaker: Dr Judith Bonzol

**Non-conformist Scottish Clerics in Early Seventeenth-Century Bermuda and the Beginnings of Presbyterianism in the New World**

Judith's paper explored how Scottish nonconformist clergy helped shape early Presbyterian and Reformed culture in Bermuda, and how this small Atlantic colony connected Scotland to New England in the seventeenth century. It centred on an anonymous letter from 1630 describing the demonic

possession, and dramatic dispossession through prayer and fasting, of a fourteen-year-old apprentice, Roger Sterrop. Two Scottish ministers, George Stirk and Patrick Copland, took part in this unsanctioned exorcism, directly violating the 1604 Church of England canons that forbade such rites.

Judith argued that Stirk, a Calvinist minister who settled on Bermuda in 1622, was almost certainly the letter's author and used the case to assert the spiritual legitimacy of nonconformist practice in a remote colony with very little episcopal oversight. This episode is set against the wider background of an English Church divided between moderate Protestants and more radical godly or Puritan groups, many influenced by Scottish Presbyterian ideas about rule by elders and ordered church government. Settled from 1612 and incorporated as the Somers Isles in the Virginia Company's charter, Bermuda at first enjoyed clear material advantages over Virginia, not least the absence of an Indigenous population, yet it soon became a pressurised tobacco colony in which the islands' tiny dimensions concentrated economic and political conflict.



*George Somers' chart of Bermuda 1610 (Wikimedia Commons)*

Within this setting, early ministers such as George Keith and, more radically, Lewes Hughes established a strongly Reformed, anti-ceremonial religious culture that dispensed with *The Book of Common Prayer* and introduced Presbyterian discipline. Stirk and Copland operated in that tradition, and the Sterrop letter becomes a window into Bermudian religious life, colonial social discipline, medical practice, and the Virginia Company's policy of exporting parish-indentured children to bolster the labour force and the Puritan cause. Judith concluded her paper by showing how Scottish emphases on education and evangelisation, conveyed by figures like Stirk and Copland, helped link Bermuda to the wider Atlantic world, including Massachusetts Bay, and laid some of the groundwork for later Presbyterian developments in the New World. These Scottish ministers helped create the conditions out of which later Bermudian Presbyterianism emerged, but they were not simply agents of a straightforward Presbyterian advance. They belonged instead to a wider Reformed world in which Presbyterian, Puritan, and Congregational impulses overlapped, competed, and adapted themselves to colonial conditions.

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS READING GROUP

### 27 May Meeting

*Looking from the North: Australian History from the Top Down*
Henry Reynolds
NewSouth (2025): ISBN: 9781761170119 (paperback)

For over thirty years from the 1960s, Henry Reynolds lived in the far north, working as an academic at James Cook University. From the start, recognising that scholars were writing the history of the continent from the perspective of the south, he set out to understand the particular history and colonisation of the

north, above the Tropic of Capricorn. Since then, he has written many books and articles, and helped to transform our understanding of Australian history and of black/white relations. This is his most recent book.

Reynolds writes that there were two separate and quite different colonisation periods in Australia. The first was from 1788 to the 1850s, when the British Government successfully colonised the south-east, with the help of convict labour. During this period, the unclaimed and unexplored 45% of continental landmass above the Tropic of Capricorn was still the preserve of the Traditional Owners, who continued with their normal lives and cultural practices.

The second period was from the 1850s through to Federation. After laying claim to the entire continent, the British Government granted the eastern Australian colonies internal self-government, with constitutions of their own devising. Small colonial governments in Queensland and South Australia thus assumed responsibility for vast, supposedly empty, tracts of land. They claimed sovereignty over the north but knew that this was not matched by European (white) occupation. So they needed to develop the north. It follows that the conquest of the north became a colonial, not an imperial, venture. It is these government institutions that had the moral responsibility for what then eventuated, including the now well-documented massacres.

Reynolds writes that the economic development of the north was only possible with non-white labour. Not many white people wanted to come north, and if they did, most did not stay. The pastoral industry depended on young Aboriginal men and women still living on Country, the sugar industry on Pacific Islanders, and pearling on Japanese divers. Meanwhile, the Chinese, who originally were drawn to Australia by gold mining, stayed and became merchants, storekeepers, fruit and vegetable growers, cooks, tailors and domestic servants. Reynolds argues that they had as much right to consider themselves as effective colonists as any of the colonists who had come north.

The success of these northern, multiracial communities offended the overriding obsession with a White Australia and, after Federation in 1901, a White Australia won out. Pacific Islanders were deported, and Chinese and Japanese communities depleted by immigration policies. Meanwhile, the unpaid labour of Indigenous Australians built the pastoral industry across the northern savannahs.

The last third of the book retells the story of the death of White Australia, and of the campaign for Indigenous rights and their legal affirmation. Reynolds ends with the militarisation currently underway in Darwin, which he suggests is in support of the projection of American power into the region, and without consulting the traditional owners.

Reynolds writes clearly and confidently in manner accessible to the common reader. The book is well-documented with endnotes and an index. I found it extremely informative and highly recommend it.
**Susan Flaxman**

## 21 August Meeting

*The Art of Power: My Story as America's first Woman Speaker of the House*

Nancy Pelosi,

Simon & Schuster (2024)

ISBN:978-I-3985-4107-8 (paperback)

ISBN:978-1-3985-4108-5 (ebook)

Nancy Pelosi was no novice when she first entered the United States House of Representatives at age forty-six. Despite her mother's plans to make her a nun, she'd been raised in a political family and engaged in political activity most of her life, even while raising five children. But this book is devoted to her purpose and path through the halls of legislative power during almost four decades of active service in the Federal House of Representatives. It highlights her own periods of power as Democratic Whip and

later as House Speaker. The latter position put her second in the presidential line of succession, after the Vice President.

Even over that period, she is selective and precise about what she wishes to convey – a message about the skills and 'art' of gaining and exerting power. Top of the essentials is 'knowing your why' – why you want to be in politics and exercise power. Her Why was 'the children', which directed her attention to issues of health, education, economic security, a safe environment and a peaceful world, and also to the strategic navigation of their political and institutional complexities.

She frames the 'art of power' in terms of leadership, which therefore drives the book's structure. Tellingly, she starts with the price of leadership, then takes the reader through five more categories. Within that structure she reveals her most 'consequential' challenges, including wars, financial crises, and political dramas, which will all resonate with anyone who has lived through the relevant decades. The current president features among those varied challenges.

Somewhat surprisingly, Pelosi does not spell out the elements of the 'art' of power, leaving readers to read between the lines. My interpretation would suggest the necessity for clear goals, strategic thinking, a firm grip on the relevant facts and the views of fellow legislators, knowing how to approach them as individuals, and treating both friend and foe with respect. Backed by her innate determination, this careful preparation helped her assess the potential success of her plans, and how and when to act. **Jan Todd**



## BIOGRAPHY READING GROUP

*The Woman in the Watch Tower*

Susan Wyndham

NewSouth Publishing, UNSW Press (2025); ISBN: 9781761170195

Susan Wyndham's biography of Elizabeth Harrower, *The Woman in the Watch Tower*, is well researched and offers a vivid portrait of the post-war Australian literary scene. It uses close readings of Harrower's novels to connect her personal experience, especially coercive domestic relationships, to the unsettling psychological force of her fiction. The book also yields fresh insights into writers such as Patrick White, Kylie Tennant, and Shirley Hazzard, and inspired me to read again Harrower's own emotionally harrowing work. Yet the biography's central question, why Harrower stopped writing, ultimately resists explanation, and leads both biographer and reader to informed speculation. **Judith Bonzol**

A long-term Fairfax book reviewer and scholar of English novelist Ivy Compton-Burnett, Susan Wyndham presents Elizabeth Harrower (1928-2020) during the 1940s-1960s as a productive novelist and short story writer. In examining her early life Wyndham provides depth to Harrower's Scottish Presbyterian forebears and her paternal Anglican family.

Wyndham observes that Harrower read Compton-Burnett and sees likenesses in their writing. The central motif of Harrower's novels (and Compton-Burnett's) is family conflict, which reviewers at the time saw as the 'abyssal depths of the psyche'. Interestingly, Text Publishing rescued Harrower's work from obscurity in 2012 not long after republication of Compton-Burnett (Puskin Press).

Harrower wrote three novels whilst working in London. Despite working in publishing and enjoying the theatre, Harrower did not associate with other Australian writers there. Also, Wyndham repeatedly states that Harrower did not read Australian novels or plays, many of which were social realist. These observations sit oddly with Wyndham's account of Harrower's belief in pacifism and non-violence, (taking part in the CND Aldermaston demonstrations), and her belief that political atmosphere affects her characters' moods as much as the weather. Would I recommend this book, or am I inclined to read Harrower? No. But our discussion was lively! **Chloë Mason**

Why did Elizabeth Harrower stop writing in the 1970s? By then she had published some short stories and four novels – *Down in the City* 1957, *The Long Prospect* 1958, *The Catherine Wheel* 1960, and *The Watch Tower* 1966. Another novel *In Certain Circles,* although finished in 1971, was withheld from publication until 2014, some eight years before her death.

This may be related to trauma – perhaps the sudden and unexpected death of her mother in 1970 or new caring responsibilities which followed. It also might be that as heir to her mother's estate Elizabeth acquired some property and capital which allowed her to forge a new way life

On reflection, the title of Wyndham's biography – *The Woman in the Watch Tower* – and its division into Parts 1 and 2 at 1971, give readers a clue to her understanding of the novelist. It suggests that Wyndham viewed Harrower as like the younger sister portrayed in Harrower's *The Woman in the Watch Tower.* In contrast to the older sister in the novel, the younger sister survives domestic abuse and coercion and escapes to what promises to be a better life.

I enjoyed Wyndham's *The Woman in the Watch Tower* for showing a woman who survived abusive, coercive experiences in her early life and drew on these for her fiction; who later seized opportunities that came her way to lead a happier life. Throughout, Harrower valued certain family ties, loyal and trusted friendships, and the importance of leaving a legacy for the benefit of future generations. **Fiona Powell**

Elizabeth Harrower's novels explore the foibles of human relationships, domestic abuse and coercive control, set at a time when many women had few options. She is known for having 'written nothing' for forty years, after three novels published, 1957-1960, then *The Watch Tower* (1966). Wyndham provides insights into 20th-century Australian literature, but listing every author acquaintance of Harrower's makes it difficult to engage in a meaningful way. Friends Patrick White, Kylie Tennant, Shirley Hazzard and Christina Stead feature in detail creating a sense of a group biography. Wyndham often reflects on why Harrower stopped writing, one conclusion being that she expended too much time and energy on those friends. Wyndham quotes David Malouf as believing Harrower stopped writing 'because she decided at some point she had said what she had to say'. Yet in interviews, Harrower told Wyndham it was never because of not having enough to say but of having too much. **Susan Steggall**



## ART NOTE

*Pulse*, Grace Cossington Smith Gallery (June-July 2026)

Yvonne Langshaw, one of four artists to participate in the exhibition Pulse at the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery, has spent a lifetime exploring the gulleys and rock formations in the bushland around her North Shore home. In a series of colourful acrylic canvasses, she paints the 'nature' of this landscape, not as topographical or figurative interpretations, but as semi-abstract evocations of changing moods and seasons. I have included the paintings as composite images to show contrasting effects: from the stark silhouettes of dead trees on rocky outcrops to the red-orange glow of leaping flames juxtaposed with a lively interpretation of sunny bushland.

Yvonne has exhibited since 1980 in solo and group shows, and I first wrote about her work in 1996 ('A Conversation between contrasting elements in colour, shape and line', *Oz Arts,* Issue 13, Autumn, 1996, p.91). Thirty years on, Yvonne's work is still fresh, her fascination with colour and pattern as strong as ever: from the vibrant yellow and old gold of bleached grass to the deep purple shadows thrown by tall trees.





*Top left:* Fragments of a Timeless Ridge *Right:* Yellow Trees
*Bottom Left: Thermal Drift. (Photographs: Susan Steggall)*



*Left:* Summer Grasses *Right:* Edge of the Park
*(Photographs: Susan Steggall)*

Yvonne's work has been described as 'like the passage of a snake through the bush, weaving and turning, but ever going forward' (Thea Bourne, 5 December 2014). **Susan Steggall**



## When Everything Melts

Recently I visited the Rogue Pop-Up Gallery, Redfern where an exhibition by Ian Howard, Emeritus Professor UNSW of the Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture, was held.

When Everything Melts is the third of a trilogy of exhibitions which explore the contribution of animals to our understanding of the time we live in and possible future projections. The first of the trilogy was Animals, exhibited in 2024 at the Rogue Pop-Up Gallery. The second was Curious Animals, exhibited by a group of artists at 798 International Art Exchange Center, Beijing, 2025, the third being When Everything Melts.

Concerning the latter exhibition, Ian Howard wrote:

> It became apparent [that] an overriding condition existed amongst the various concerns raised by these animal images: the erosion, collapse, and even disintegration of things otherwise considered solid and taken for granted. That is, values, behaviours, and interaction, both personally and globally.[1]

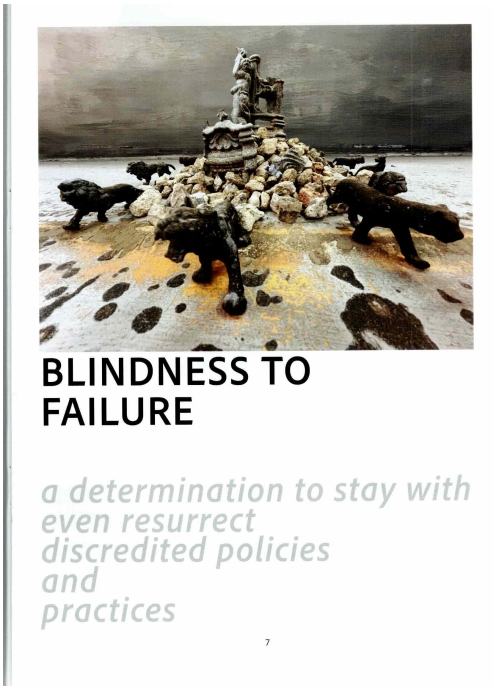
Many artists today are at the forefront of expressing modern times and making projections into the future. As such their works often confront us deep within our consciousness, jolting us out of complacency.

[1] Ian Howard, When Everything Melts, *Catalogue*, 2026, p.3.

These artists cause us to think and reflect with images that disturb, perplex and disrupt our attitudes by exploring our biases, perspectives, and world views.

The digital images of discarded everyday objects and patinaed animals, portrayed in this exhibition, *When Everything Melts*, present the viewer with an artistic vision of what the future might hold. Conservative thinkers will be non-plussed and may feel uncomfortable with such avant-garde visions. But this has always been the case for those who do not wish to be challenged by the new and often unthinkable.

Encountering the images created by Ian Howard in this exhibition, was, for me, confronting, causing me to ask unsettling questions: Are we as humans and our world disintegrating? Are we destroying ourselves and our world by failing to listen to what prophets and artists are depicting. Are we failing to take note of the dissonances within our culture? As Ian Howard concludes his introduction, 'Grounds shift, bodies drip, atmospheres thicken then thin and noise is loud or silent; it seems that everything is unstable…at the point of melting'.[2] **Lesley Potter**




## RESEARCH NOTE

### Mrs Jane Lockett: educator, author and social commentator

The journalist and social activist Dame Mary Gilmore is familiar to many Australians, not least because she features on the Australian polymer ten-dollar banknote. Gilmore's aunt, Jane (Jeannie) Lockett, née Beattie, is far less well known. Yet she too was also an educator, talented journalist, novelist and social commentator whose career was cut short by her death at forty-three in 1890.

Jane Lockett was the daughter of Hugh and Mary Beattie, who had emigrated to NSW from County Armagh in the north of Ireland in 1842. They settled in the Wagga Wagga area. Jane was born in 1847 and married Thomas Lockett at Wagga Wagga on 27 May 1868. The couple had three children, with the last born in 1872. Shortly after the birth of their third child Thomas deserted Jane and the children. Although Jane and Thomas reunited about a year later, they separated permanently in 1876 and Jane moved to Sydney. They never divorced.

[2] Howard, *Catalogue*, p.3.

Jane was accepted into the Council of Education Student Training School in July 1877 and was awarded a Certificate 3B in December. The last position she held was Mistress of the Girls Department at Plunkett Street Primary School, which was Gazetted on 13 July 1888.

Although still married to Jane, Thomas Lockett using the name Arthur Thomas Lockhart, married Elizabeth Murray at Stanley (Victoria) in November 1881. He was subsequently tried and found guilty of bigamy at the Assizes in Beechworth (Victoria) in December 1888. Jane was present at his trial. Lockhart aka Lockett was sentenced to three and a half years' imprisonment with hard labour, including solitary confinement during the first week of every third month of his sentence.

Jane Lockett was a prolific writer. Her 1890 obituary noted that she was the author of 'articles of a descriptive nature, humorous sketches, and essays' that appeared in the Australian press. Writing under names including Jennie Lockett and Jeannie Lockett, she contributed articles on social and political issues to Australian newspapers and prominent British journals, including the *Westminster Review*, *Nineteenth Century* and *St James's Gazette*. Her writing addressed questions concerning women and the issue of divorce, particularly its impact on women.

She was also active as a fiction writer. Her short stories and essays appeared in publications such as the *Australian Town and Country Journal* and *Evening News*. Several of her mysteries and dramatic stories, including 'The Millwood Mystery', 'An Awfully Sudden Death', 'The Garston House Tragedy' and 'The Case of Dr Hilston', were serialised in the *Sydney Mail* and *Australian Town and Country Journal*. Her novel *Judith Grant* was published posthumously. The State Library of NSW holds a digital copy which may be read online. 'The Millwood Mystery' was republished by Corella Press, as part of its 19th-Century Australian Crime and Mystery Collection in 2019.

Lockett's surviving writings provide a fascinating glimpse into the concerns of nineteenth-century Australian women and the remarkable, largely forgotten career of Mary Gilmore's aunt. **Christine Yeats**

## *ON THE LIGHT SIDE*

### Wacky Consolations

Warning. Although the following does not contain remnants of peanuts, it may contain a certain amount of ego. Usually when I scribble a newly discovered quote I note the author and place the quote in quotes. If it is my own thought that I have stumbled upon I don't use quotes. So, the following may be my own thought: Moderation in all things including excess. I think Groucho Marx or Oscar Wilde would appreciate this.

Anyway, to protect myself from accusations of plagiarism I typed my quote into the internet. No-one claimed it. (Note: The internet does not know everything. Maybe out there in the universe someone can dispute my claim.) But, anyway, via the internet it was a close call. In 1909 Mark Twain said, 'I never smoke to excess – that is, I smoke in moderation, only one cigar at a time'.

A character in Oscar Wilde's 1893 play, *A Woman of No Importance* championed moderation, but another character disagreed.

LADY HUNSTANTON: I don't believe in women thinking too much. Women should think in moderation, as they should do all things in moderation.

LORD ILLINGWORTH: Moderation is a fatal thing, Lady Hunstanton. Nothing succeeds like excess.

I have to say I think my quote has more zing to it. (Sorry Oscar and Groucho.)

As I say, I think Groucho would have liked it. My favourite Groucho, which has consoled me in my tussles with the English language is: 'One morning I shot an elephant in my pajamas. How he got into my pajamas I'll never know'.

So here we are. Quotes and humour. Wisdom and fun. Put them together and it's a personal medication for a painful world. A crazy world. As they say, a sign of madness is when you keep doing

the same thing and expect different outcomes. Humanity seems addicted to war. The outcomes are always death and destruction. So fiddling about with quotations from informed and intelligent people is my method of coping without going crazy myself. Although I have heard it said that to survive in a crazy environment you need to be crazier than the environment itself. It's not easy being sensible and moderate.

More than once, after watching the news on TV, I have logged on to YouTube for a healing dose of Monty Python. Monty Python uses absurdity to highlight the contradictions and limitations of human reasoning. Pythonesque humour laughs at existential questions and philosophical ideas. Absurdity and satire are used to explore logic, ethics and human nature – to poke fun at that incomplete, imperfect, fallible creature: the human species, and for any individual, especially those with power, who, as my mother used to say 'has tickets on themselves'.

One of my favourite Python sketches is 'The Philosopher's Football Match'. This sketch juxtaposes intellectual thought with physical action. Famous philosophers on the German team include Kant, Wittgenstein, Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. They oppose the Greek team which includes Plato, Aristotle, Socrates and Archimedes. Twenty-two philosophers take to the field, and run madly around muttering to themselves, before eventually realising that someone has to actually kick the ball. Poor old Nietzsche gets booked by the referee, Confucius, for arguing and accusing him of having no free will.

Humour is an escape valve. A breathing space to laugh at the world. An antidote to human arrogance. I've noticed that some of the greatest troublemakers in history have been without a sense of humour. I imagine Hitler might laugh at someone slipping on a banana skin, but that's about it. Does Donald Trump have a sense of humour? Does Putin? Did Stalin? Did Idi Amin? (On the other hand, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was a comedian and entertainer.)

What I would like to know about any politician I might vote for, in the hope they might improve something, anything, is: What are your three favourite quotes? Who is your favourite comedian? And possibly, have you ever had a real job? And, importantly, do you have the capacity to laugh at yourself?

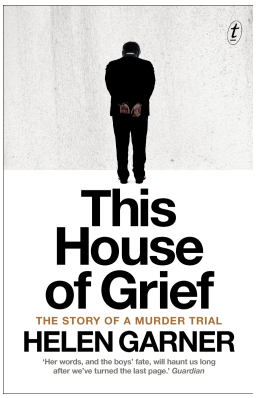
One thing you can be sure of: It's a funny old world. **Brian Nicholls**

* Wacky. Funny or amusing in a slightly odd way. Derived from the noun 'wack' meaning crazy or eccentric in mid 20th-century American English.
* Mark Twain. Pen name for Samuel Langhorne Clemens. 1835-1910. American writer, humourist and essayist. Author of *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*. Praised as 'the greatest humourist the United States has produced'.
* Oscar Wilde. 1854-1900. Irish playwright, poet, novelist and critic. Famed for his wit and epigrams. Author of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891). A spokesman for the late 19th-century aesthetic movement which advocated 'art for art's sake'.
* Groucho Marx. 1890-1977. American vaudeville, radio, film and TV star. Best known for his rapid-fire wit.
* Monty Python's Flying Circus. British sketch comedy series aired on BBC-TV from 1969 to 1974. Known for its surreal humour and lasting impact on comedy and popular culture.
* 'Madness is when you keep doing the same thing and expect different outcomes'. This quote is often attributed to Albert Einstein. 1879-1955. But what he actually said was, 'We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them'.
* 'Tickets on yourself'. Australian slang to describe a person who thinks very highly of them self and believe they are special compared to others.
*'It's a funny old world'. Attributed to Margaret Thatcher (1935-2013) in her 1990 resignation speech. Often linked to the philosophical concept of existentialism. Promotes a willingness to find humour in the unexpected twists and turns that make the world funny, mysterious and beautiful.



# READING GROUP MEETINGS FOR 2026

## BIOGRAPHY GROUP




The next zoom meeting will be on Thursday 29 October at 2 pm.
We'll be discussing *This House of Grief'* by Helen Garner, 2014 (288 pages).
A work of non-fiction, subtitled 'The story of a murder trial', it is about a father accused of killing his three sons on Father's Day 2005. Garner attended two trials and appeals over seven years before publishing this work. Here we are considering the genre of life writing as employed by Garner to record and reflect on the experiences and nature of the events revealed by the court processes.
If you are interested in joining us please contact the Convenor Alice Paul on: acpnsw6@gmail.com



## PUBLIC AFFAIRS READING GROUP

There are two more meeting for the year in person at The Hummingbird Room, 222 Pitt Stree.t

Friday 9 October, 11-12.30 pm. Sean Kelly's 'The Good Fight – What does Labor Stand For', *Quarterly Essay*, Issue 100, (Nov. 2025).

6 November, 11-12.30 pm. N J Enfield's *What is Truth for?* (2026) contact Christine for an electronic copy.

If you are interested in joining the group please contact the Convenor Christine Jennett on cjennett@ozemail.com.au.

### Verbalising Can Clarify

Do you wonder what other people might think of your ideas?
Tired of keeping them to yourself?
Want some genuine, helpful, and considered discussion of *your* work-in-progress?
If an ISAA Work-in-Progress meeting interests you, please contact:
cjennett@ozemail.com.au

**Book Notes Exhibition Notes Film Notes**

**Research Snippets**

If you have read a book, seen an exhibition or a film of substance lately or come across a snippet of interesting research that you would like to share with fellow ISAA members send in a piece (up to 300 words) containing its key insights and arguments to: cjennett@ozemail.com.au.